

from our officers. He is a sterling example for young Soldiers to emulate . . . well known as a "Soldiers' General." His service to the Nation has been exceptional, and General Ellis is more than deserving of this recognition.

General Ellis will be sorely missed by those who have had the opportunity to serve with him over these many years. I join with his friends and family as he celebrates this richly deserved upcoming retirement and wish him my best as he enjoys everyday of this new journey.●

TOUR DE GEORGIA IS A TOUR DE FORCE

● Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, this week Georgians will line the roads to witness the top-ranked bicycle stage race in North America.

The Dodge Tour de Georgia promotes tourism, stimulates local industry, and is proud to benefit the Georgia Cancer Coalition. The race serves as a rolling festival to entertain and educate spectators across the Peach State about cycling, fitness, and most importantly about the possibility for a cure for and the prevention of cancer. This second annual event, April 20 to 25, 2004, takes pro cyclists and multitudes of visitors on a scenic 653-mile journey through the great State of Georgia.

Athletes from over 23 countries will compete for \$100,000 in cash and prizes. With a mix of road races, an individual time trial, and challenging terrain, the 2004 Dodge Tour de Georgia will be an exciting event for both racers and spectators.

A great deal of attention will be on cycling this year, since many elite athletes vie to represent their countries in the Olympic games in road, time trial or track disciplines of cycling in August. And, five-time Tour de France champion Lance Armstrong seeks his record sixth consecutive win on the Champs-Elysees in July. Part of the reason for a significant increase in media and spectator interest in the Dodge Tour de Georgia this year is because Armstrong will compete in the event with his United States Postal Service Pro Cycling Team. It will be the only stage race Armstrong is expected to enter in North America, and the only event in the U.S. for him prior to his record attempt in France.

Officials with the Dodge Tour de Georgia project a \$20 to \$30 million boost to the Georgia economy. The promotional and media value provided to its charitable beneficiary, the Georgia Cancer Coalition, is expected to surpass \$2.5 million, doubling the number from 2003. The 2004 Dodge Tour de Georgia, the country's premier, professional cycling stage race, will visit 60 of Georgia's 159 counties in 6 days, from Tuesday, April 20 to Sunday, April 25.

As a world-class sporting event, the Dodge Tour de Georgia is defined in part by the 120 elite, professional cy-

clists who will compete in seven stage races, traversing 653 miles across Georgia. As a vehicle to promote tourism and stimulate economic growth, the race is defined by the thousands of visitors and volunteers who plan to visit from across Georgia, the U.S. and abroad. Over 750,000 spectators are expected for the week.

From just the impact of media, officials, teams, and support personnel, not including spectators, local communities will see an immediate impact from 3,000 room nights and over 7,000 meals.

I commend the sponsors, organizers, and staff of the Dodge Tour de Georgia, for bringing a world-class event of this magnitude to the people of the United States. I also commend the Union Cycliste Internationale, for sanctioning this event.

I would like this body to recognize the host communities, Alpharetta, Athens, Carrollton, Columbus, Dalton, Dahlonega, Dawsonville, Hiawassee/Young Harris, Macon, Rome, and Thomaston; as well as their local organizing committees for their contribution to this worthy cause.

Cancer is a brutal killer that strikes without regard to age, race, sex, or station in life. I am grateful that there are organizations such as the Georgia Cancer Coalition, which are dedicated to its eradication, and there is support from organizations such as Dodge; GE Energy; The Georgia Department of Industry, Trade, and Tourism; Georgia Power; Southern LINC; and the many others who have bonded together to organize and promote Georgia's Race to Cure Cancer.

This event is not only about the 11 communities hosting this event, it is not only about Georgia. It is about bringing the finest cyclists in the world to compete in our Nation. It is about raising awareness to fight a terrible killer so that all of the world may benefit. I am proud that this event will be held in my home State of Georgia and ask that this body commend the Dodge Tour de Georgia for its fine work.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:08 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4181. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the marriage penalty relief provided under the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001.

H.R. 3170. An act to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to provide incentives for small business investment, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 376. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby.

H. Con. Res. 388. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3170. An act to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to provide incentives for small business investment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

The following concurrent resolution was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 388. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 4181. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the increased standard deduction, and the 15-percent individual income tax rate bracket expansion, for married taxpayers filing joint returns.

S. 2370. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-7260. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare Program; Elimination of Statement of Intent Procedures for Filing Medicare Claims" (RIN0938-AK79) received on April 27, 2004; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7261. A communication from the White House Liaison, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a vacancy, designation of acting officer, and nomination for the position of Under Secretary for Domestic Finance, Department of